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## *House of Representatives*

### TO CONGRATULATE HELEN C. VANCE ON RECEIVING THE BROWN-HUDSON AWARD FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

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HON. HEATH SHULER  
OF NORTH CAROLINA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Tuesday, March 23, 2010*

**MR. SHULER.** Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Helen C. Vance on receiving the Brown-Hudson Award from the North Carolina Folklore Society for her outstanding work to preserve the North Shore Cemeteries in Swain County, North Carolina.

In the 1940s, many families in Western North Carolina were displaced when the Fontana Dam was constructed on the Little Tennessee River in Swain County, and as a result they had to leave behind their homesites and family cemeteries. Plans to build the North Shore Road that would connect displaced families to their old homesites were discontinued in the 1960s. Although the lack of a road makes it difficult to access these sites, Ms. Vance has worked hard to ensure that local communities are able to visit their cemeteries.

For over thirty years, Ms. Vance has organized the Appalachian tradition of Decoration Day, a day where relatives, friends, and neighbors of the deceased in Western North Carolina travel together on trails through the woods, or by boat over the Fontana Lake to local these cemeteries for a day of remembrance. On Decoration Day, communities spend the day together cleaning the cemeteries and placing decorations on the sites.

The Brown-Hudson Award recognizes Ms. Vance's exceptional contributions to preserving our traditions in our mountain region, and her tireless work to maintain the

North Shore cemeteries for future generations. Her community activism is a source of pride to me and to Western North Carolina.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues today to rise with me in recognizing the amazing efforts of the Mrs. Vance, and the dedication she has shown to preserving the historic North Shore cemeteries Western North Carolina. I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating her outstanding commitment to our community traditions.

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